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News focus

By Charles Bartlett

EXCERPT:

Congress still wants to hear about CIA secret operations but the intelligence agency hasn't learned how to live with the leaks that result. Only a few hours after CIA Director George Bush told the House International Relations Committee that the administration plans no covert steps to affect the Italian elections, the news was leaked on Capitol Hill.

Some hope the Senate's creation of an oversight committee will persuade Congress to repeal the Hughes-Ryan amendment, which obliges the CIA director to report all covert activities to at least six committees. Over the past 16 months, virtually none of the information conveyed to Congress under the amendment has been kept secret.